The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news comment and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1572 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1941 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 31, NO. 21

FACING the FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

Whether we like it or not, "business" is not going to go on as usual in America. When we say "business," we mean capital and labor and Government as well.

You don't have to take our word for it. The President of the United States has said it. He has proclaimed an unlimited national emergency.

To anyone who has followed the course of the war in Europe, it should be apparent that this emergency will not last for merely a day or a month or a year. It will be of long duration. And it will not come to an end soon.

We've got to get used to this idea right now and adjust the course of our normal lives as quickly as possible to emergency conditions. Otherwise it will be harder to take in the future.

As yet, our country is at peace. We have that to be grateful for. How long we will be able to maintain peace depends upon how direct and how serious the threat to our safety as a nation becomes. But even while we are at peace, we are going to have to learn all over again what it means to live under war-time conditions. For that is what the unlimited national emergency will bring.

This emergency is not of our own making. It has been forced upon us. Our danger comes from the threat of Europe's new dictators. We are fighting a war for the domination of the world. This war will not end and our emergency will not be over until Totalitarianism is crushed.

We Did Not Wait

Until now the people of our country have lulled themselves into a false sense of security. We have bluddered as we read of the bombing of cities in Europe, but at the same time we have assured ourselves that "it can't happen here."

Now it is up to us to prove that it can't happen here. We can do this only by subordinating selfish interests for the common good and uniting in a real, honest-to-goodness all-out effort to put the national defense program over the top.

The American Federation of Labor did not wait to be told to do its part. Months ago it instituted a voluntary no-strike policy on national defense projects which, as the Executive Council points out, has been 99 per cent effective.

And now, on the very day after the President's radio address in which he proclaimed the national emergency, the Executive Council has gone further and served warning on the one per cent minority that future divagations from the policy of the American Federation of Labor will be met with strict disciplinary measures.

It is not pleasant for the American Federation of Labor to do this. Just as indulgent parents don't like to keep constantly telling their children not to do this and not to do that, the American Federation of Labor hates to say "No!" to its affiliated unions reluctantly and only for their own good.

But there is now no other course. The safety of the nation demands that national defense production must not be obstructed for any reason whatever. The safety of the nation means the safety of all of us. It is the prime consideration in any and all decisions that will have to be made during this emergency.

Let's Be Reasonable

After all, is the American Federation of Labor calling upon its affiliated unions to make sacrifices that are too heavy to bear? All the no-strike policy means is that union organizations shall give the Government a chance to help them settle disputes without stopping national defense machinery by strikes.

The Conciliation Service of the Department of Labor has a long and honorable record. Its services have frequently been of great value to labor organizations. The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor itself, at its last annual convention, paid tribute to this friendly arm of the Government.

Then, there is the Mediation Board. This Board is made up of representatives of Government, labor and industry. The American Federation of Labor has two representatives serving in an official capacity on the members of this Board. They are Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and Vice President George M. Harrison.

Is there any reason why a union which is in difficulty with management should hesitate to entrust its case to these agencies or fear unjust treatment? If there is, there must be something wrong with the union's case.

Organized labor has a stake in the future welfare of their members and should and must constantly strive to better their conditions. Of course, the rising cost of living and the increased productivity of workers make it only fair and reasonable that employees should raise wages. Of course, management must be made to live up to the law of the land and bargain collectively with the representatives of workers.

But all of these objectives can be achieved by peaceful processes without the exercise of a little patience and without resort to strikes. That is what the American Federation of Labor is calling on all its members to do for the common cause of free labor and American democracy.

How We Stand
A.F. of L. 100% FOR DEFENSE

Washington, D. C.—American labor erican democracy by buying defense is rallying behind the national defense program, President Roosevelt was informed at the White House by President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany of the American Federation of Labor.

They presented to the President an original oil painting, pictured above, bearing the legend "A. F. of L. 100% FOR DEFENSE," from which 50,000 large color posters are being reproduced for distribution and display by local unions throughout the country.

At the same time, Mr. Green and Mr. Meany told the President the Federation has purchased $50,000 worth of national defense bonds—the maximum amount permissible—and is calling on all of its national and local unions and the individual members of these organizations to "invest in Am-

bonds."

Beneath the rallying call of "A. F. of L. 100% FOR DEFENSE" in white block letters against a blue background, the poster shows as typical workingmen, carrying lunch-boxes, marching cheerfully to their defense jobs on a thriving industrial development sidelined in the background.

At the bottom of the picture, in ivory letters, is the slogan, "BUY DEFENSE BONDS."

The oil painting was executed for the American Federation of Labor by the renowned Washington artist, George Lohr.

The President expressed warm admiration of the painting and said he would send it to his library at Hyde Park, N. Y., for permanent display.

Sales and Pay Roll Taxes Opposed By A. F. of L. Executive Council

Washington, D. C.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, at its spring session here, took a stand against taxes designed to raise the sales tax and the pay roll tax in the $3,500,000,000 national defense tax bill under consideration by the House Ways and Means Committee.

Emphasizing the fact that these taxes would raise the living costs of hundreds of millions of workers whose incomes are already below "bare subsistence" level, the Executive Council declared that Congress should turn its attention to taxes designed to prevent the creation of defense millionaires.

"Taxes that would hit the pay envelopes of workers and cripple the buying power of the great mass of American people are the wrong way to finance the national defense program," the Executive Council said.

"We ask the House Ways and Means Committee, which is now considering a new tax bill to raise $3,500,000,000 in additional revenue, to reject any and all forms of sales tax and pay roll tax.

"It is obvious that greater revenues must be raised to cover the cost of the vast defense program, but this money must not be taken away from those who do not earn enough now to maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and their families.

"The minimum income which the average American family needs for decent food, shelter, clothing and health care has been fixed by Government analysts at $2,000 a year. Yet official statistics show that two-thirds of American families receive less than $2,000 a year in income. In fact, more than one-fourth of the families in this country have total earnings of less than $1,250 a year, which is far below the income needed for bare subsistence.

"American wage earners are already hard-hit by taxes which directly and indirectly drain off a considerable portion of their income for existent taxes, together with the rapidly rising cost of living are making it increasingly difficult to maintain even present standards.

"On the other side of the picture we see that American industry is expanding on a vast scale and is reaping huge profits from the defense program. We believe that industry is entitled to a fair profit, but there is absolutely no justification for the creation of a single new defense millionaire. Congress must revise the structure of corporate taxes accordingly.

"Furthermore, there is need for even wider expansion of industry, not only for defense production but for civilian needs, unless this is done serious shortages will be created in such products needed in our every day life.

"We believe that the expansion of our excess profits tax system, with the construction of thousands of new factories and the creation of many new industries, will provide a fertile source of additional revenue.

"These fields and others should be thoroughly explored before Congress attempts to resort to heavier consumer taxes. The main burden of taxation is on the wage earner already. It would be economic folly to increase this load."

Wickard Asked Not to Purchase Fruit From Struck Citrus Fields

Washington, D. C.—Secretary-Treasurer George Meany of the American Federation of Labor told Secretary of Agriculture Claude R. Wickard that it would be unfair to 5,000 striking Ventura County, Calif., lemon pickers if the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation were to purchase any surplus citrus fruit from the California Fruit Growers Exchange.

Mr. Meany called for the cancellation of FSCC plans to expend $1,000,000 this year for surplus exchange oranges and lemons.

The strike, now four months old, is being conducted by the Agricultural and Citrus Workers Union, Local 26242, affiliated with the A. F. of L.

The California Fruit Growers Exchange, target of the strike, controls California's multi-million-dollar orange and lemon industry.

After the meeting with Secretary Wickard, Mr. Meany added:

"The California Fruit Growers Exchange, which is backed by the notorious Associated Farmers, has brazenly flouted the now generally recognized principle that employers must engage in collective bargaining with their employees.

"Because of this refusal to sit down around the table and discuss wages, hours and working conditions with the union designated by the Ventura County lemon pickers as their collective bargaining representative, a strike was called late in January. This strike is still in progress today because the Fruit Growers Exchange has persisted in its stiff-necked, medieval attitude.

"Together with Meyer L. Lewis, chief Western organizer of the American Federation of Labor, and Matthew Tobriner, Western A. F. of L. counsel, I met with the Secretary of Agriculture.

"The Secretary was informed that the American Federation of Labor feels that, inasmuch as the California Fruit Growers Exchange refuses to recognize the laws of the land, it would be improper for the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation to take any surplus oranges and lemons from the Exchange this year.

"The sum of $1,000,000 had been earmarked for the purchase of surplus California Fruit Growers Exchange citrus products this year.

"Mr. Wickard indicated the utmost sympathy with the position of the American Federation of Labor. It is our intention to follow the matter through to the finish, for it would be silly for the government to give support to employers who at this late day seek to defeat legitimate unionization of workers whom they have long kept in a state of peonage.

"Financially as well as otherwise, the American Federation of Labor is giving every conceivable assistance to the struggling union and is determined that victory shall soon be theirs."

Mr. Lewis has already visited a number of cities in the East and Middle West and plans to visit others to enlist the active cooperation of trade union ists and the public at large in furthering the strikers' cause.

Green Lauds Subscription Books To Aid Labor in Great Britain

Washington, D. C.—President William Green hailed distribution of Aid to British Labor subscription books among 50,000 local unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. The subscription books are being circulated among the four and a half million members of the American Federation of Labor as part of the efforts of the Committee to Aid British Labor's campaign to raise funds for the relief of the British workers who are battling valiantly against the onslaught of the axis powers.

Expressing confidence that the drive would attain tremendous success, and urging every member of the American Federation of Labor to help attain that end, President Green, who is honorary chairman of the committee, gave aid in a letter to Matthew Woll, chairman of the committee.

"I am sure the loyal American people who are members of the American Federation of Labor will welcome this opportunity to make their individual contribution, however modest, not only as concrete evidence of their sympathy, give relief and assistance to our brothers across the sea, but also as a means of expressing their hate and disgust for the totalitarian powers who would crucify laboring men and their unions as the first step in bringing about their so-called 'new order,' which in really not new but is merely a new mask on the ancient face of the jungle, respecting neither decency nor justice, and relying for its existence merely on brute force in the subjugation of the weak by the strong."

The campaign also has been endorsed by President Roosevelt and Wendell L. Willkie and is now on in full force. It is receiving the active cooperation of all state federations of labor through their presidents who are acting as state chairmen, and an overwhelming number of city central bodies. Contributions through these bodies and national, international and local unions have already commenced to roll in. From all indications it would seem as if this campaign will surpass any previous effort on the part of the labor movement to relieve suffering and want, and advance the cause of labor.

JOBS HIT 1929 PEAK; 37,500,000 AT WORK

Washington, D. C.—Preliminary estimates by Government experts indicated that, due to the national defense program, there now are more than 37,500,000 wage earners at work in non-agricultural pursuits. This number exceeds the 1929 peak and reaches the highest levels in United States history.

This total compares with the boom figure of 37,470,000 in September, 1929, and the depression low of 24,381,000 during March, 1933, but does not include Army and Navy personnel, workers on WPA and National Youth projects or men in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

In addition to the millions in non-agricultural employment, it is estimated that almost 10,000,000 men and women are engaged in agriculture.

News Briefs

PACIFIC COAST SKIPPERS DEFY NAZIS; FIGHT REDS

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt received a pledge from a group of West Coast sea captains that they will sail their ships to any port of the world regardless of Nazi threats of attack. The pledge was contained in a letter from Capt. Charles F. May, president of West Coast Local No. 90, National Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots of America, AFL affiliate.

Capt. May's letter also contained a promise to fight Communists and Nazis in the American Merchant Marine. "So far as we are concerned," the letter said, "a total fight is on against the foul tactics of the Communists and their equally loathsome Nazi partners. It is resolved that they must be cleared out and that their rotten influence must be wiped off the face of the earth." We are pledged to fight all dictatorships. Mr. President, we are ready."

PROVIDENCE FIRM SIGNS POCKETBOOK UNION PACT

New York, N. Y.—Samuel Reinlib, president of the International Ladies Handbag, Pocketbook and Novelty Workers Union, (AFL) reported that Blacher Brothers, pocketbook manufacturing company of Providence, Rhode Island, has signed a closed shop contract with the union covering about 525 workers.

Included in the contract is a clause providing for the readjustment of wage rates when the union has succeeded in organizing the majority of the workers employed in the industry. This clause provides for the stabilization of the pocketbook frame industry and seeks the elimination of cut-throat competition.

President Reinlib reiterated that the pocketbook workers had taken a definite stand against the frames manufactured in non-union shops.

HARRY BRIDGES IS HELD NATION'S REDDEST RED

San Francisco.—Harry Bridges is not only a Communist—he is one of the leading Communists in the United States, according to Maj. Joseph J. Schoefield, chief of the Immigration and Naturalization Department.

Testifying at the Bridges deportation hearing, Schoefield said:

"I believe it my duty to present evidence supporting my contention that he is both a Communist and one of the leading Communists in the United States."

Earlier he said James O'Neil, radio announcer now serving a 60-day jail term for contempt, had reported seeing Bridges taking an application for Communist Party membership book. O'Neil went to jail rather than testify against Bridges.

Bridges is being examined under the new alien law which provides deportation for aliens guilty of ever indulging in subversive activities.

WALTHAM WATCH CO. SIGNS JEWELRY WORKERS PACT

New York, N. Y.—Samuel E. Beardsley, general secretary-treasurer of the International Jewelry Workers Union, (AFL) announced that Local No. 72 had ratified the agreement with the Waltham Watch Company, of Waltham, Mass., providing a wage increase of 2½ cents per hour, double pay for Sunday labor and 8-hour day with time and one-half for overtime, vacations with pay, and provisions for the peaceful settlement of disputes by arbitration in cases where they are not adjusted directly by the governmental board of review and the company.

The Waltham Watch Company has 1,975 employes of whom 1,875 are members of the union.

OIL TANKER MEN JOIN AFL SEAFARERS UNION

San Francisco, Calif.—Practically all of the members of the engine and deck departments on the Associated Oil tankers have pledged themselves to the Seafarers International Union of North America, Harry Lundeberg, president of the international, announced. He said the CIO union controls no shipping on the West Coast directly, and that organizers of the Seafarers and its affiliated Sailors Union of the Pacific "are completing every tanker that has no barbed wire fence—and even that they manage to find a way in—before the Army and Navy personnel, workers on WPA and National Youth projects or men in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

TEXTILE WORKERS GAIN INCREASED WAGE RATE

Hartsville, S. C.—The renewed agreement, running for two years, between the Hartsville Local Union of the United Textile Workers of America (AFL) and the Hartsville Print and Dye Works carries a wage increase of three cents an hour for the first year of the agreement, with provision for reopening the wage question at the expiration of the first year.

AFL Executive Council Puts Teeth Into No-Strike Policy For Defense

Promptly Follows Up President's Declaration of Emergency By Taking Disciplinary Action

Washington, D. C.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor promptly followed up President Roosevelt's proclamation of an unlimited national emergency by putting teeth into the no-strike policy of the Federation to assure uninterrupted production of national defense materials.

Any local union under direct A. F. of L. supervision which goes on strike without first giving full opportunity to the Labor Department's Conciliation Service and the National Defense Mediation Board to settle the dispute peaceably will be strictly disciplined, the Council declared.

At the same time it called on all national and international unions to apply disciplinary measures provided in their constitutions against affiliated local unions which ignore this policy.

"The President of the United States has said that national defense production must not be interrupted or obstructed by industrial disputes," the Council declared. "He has appealed to us in all good will to utilize the conciliation and mediation machinery set up by the Government to avoid stoppages of production.

"We must do this. We can do this. And we pledge our good faith as Americans to the President that we will do it."

The text of the Council's statement follows:

"President Roosevelt has now made it clear to all Americans how near and how menacing are the dangers which threaten the American way of life. We agree fully with him that only national defense can best be protected only by thorough preparedness and by courageous action in support of Great Britain and other democracies. Any other course is equivalent to surrender to totalitarianism.

"By proclaiming an unlimited national emergency, the President has brought home to the American people that it is incumbent upon all of us to make sacrifices for the national defense. Forces beyond our control have disrupted the usual procedures of our daily lives. We are not living in normal times. We are now actually and officially in a grave emergency. If we try to pretend there is no emergency we invite disaster.

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor calls upon all its members to serve the cause of American democracy.

"The President of the United States has said that national defense production must not be interrupted or obstructed by industrial disputes. He has appealed to us in all good will to utilize the conciliation and mediation machinery set up by the Government to avoid stoppages of production.

"We must do this. We can do this. And we pledge our good faith as Americans to the President that we will do it.

"The American Federation of Labor has heretofore enunciated a no-strike policy. It has appealed to all its affiliated organizations and members to exercise self-discipline. It has urged them to exhaust every opportunity of conciliation and mediation before adopting the final resort to strikes.

"The response to these appeals have been gratifying. Strikes by American Federation of Labor unions on defense projects have been few and far between. The no-strike policy of the American Federation of Labor has proven 99 per cent effective.

"However, we cannot be satisfied with anything less than complete unity with our national policy in times of national emergency. Our record must be 100 per cent perfect if we are to be humanly possible.

"Therefore, we call upon every union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor to refrain for any reason whatsoever from causing a strike interfering with national defense production until full opportunity has first been given to the Conciliation Service of the Department of Labor and to the National Defense Mediation Board to bring about a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

"Any local union under direct jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor will take disciplinary action itself against any local union coming under the latter's jurisdiction which violates this policy.

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor calls upon its national and international unions to take such disciplinary action as is provided in their constitutions against affiliated local union which fails to comply with a decision of the Council.

"We know that the vast majority of loyal and patriotic trade unions making up the American Federation of Labor will continue to live up to their responsibilities as they have in the past. They will do this gladly and of their own free will."

7,000,000 JOBLESS, AFL COUNCIL SAYS

Probable Decrease to 5,000,000 Warrants Cut in WPA Funds For Next Year

Washington, D. C.—Visioning a reduction in the number of unemployed from 7,700,000 to 5,000,000 due to increased jobs provided by the national defense program, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor approved President Roosevelt's recommendation that the WPA appropriation for the fiscal year beginning next July be reduced to $875,000,000, but warned that Federal funds should not be slashed below this point.

"The latest estimates of the American Federation of Labor show there are still about 7,000,000 persons unemployed in this country but the probabilities are this number will be reduced to 5,000,000 within a year because of the rapid expansion of defense industries," the Executive Council said.

"In view of this situation, the American Federation of Labor approves President Roosevelt's recommendation to Congress that WPA appropriations for the coming fiscal year be cut by $875,000,000.

"It would be dangerous and foolhardy, however, to slash the appropriations more drastically. We cannot, even in times of emergency, destroy the army of unemployed; and, much as we would like to see it happen, there is little likelihood that all of these men and women will be able to find jobs in private industry in the coming year.

"There are many factors preventing the complete absorption of the unemployed in the immediate future, even while industrial production goes into high gear. Man-hour production is increasing rapidly. We are told that such an extent that in some industries one man now produces as much as two used to do a few years ago. This is due to new labor-saving devices and processes.

"Furthermore, each year there is a considerable influx of new workers into the labor market. Augmenting these, it is expected that millions of farm workers, lured by prospects of higher pay and steady work, will seek jobs in defense industries. Another danger is that many workers now employed in non-defense goods industries will be displaced if shortage of raw materials develops in these fields.

"Therefore, the appropriation of $875,000,000 asked by the President for WPA during the fiscal year ending June 1942, is none too high. It means that WPA employment will have to be cut by 50,000 by the end of next month from what it was on March 15. It means that the WPA will be able to employ an average of only a million persons during the coming year.

"Under these circumstances, further economies could be achieved only at the expense of extreme suffering by those who are unemployed through no fault of their own."

All men who may be reached through this notice, should be informed that working conditions are of the best and that wages have increased during the past few years from 50 per cent to 100 per cent and now range from $150 to $300 a month.

Large bonuses are paid on almost all voyages to foreign ports.

Those need for radio officers is not limited to men who have experience, but extends to cover all men who hold first or second class radiotelegraph licenses issued by the Federal Communications Commission who have no experience.

Before any men who fit into the category described above have any American port, they should get in touch with any one of the following offices of the Radio Officers' Union:

New York—Room 1511, 265 West 14th Street.

Boston—Room 406, 170 Summer Street.

Baltimore—14 East Lexington Street.

New Orleans—348 Baronne Street.

San Francisco—Room 402, 110 Market Street.

Defense Program Causes Demand For AFL Merchant Marine Officers

The position of the American Merchant Marine in national defense has accelerated the demand for more worthy A. F. of L. Merchant Marine radio officers. The Radio Officers' Union of the Commercial Telegraphers Union requests that all A. F. of L. organizations throughout the nation make known this need for radio officers, and to assist in expediting the placing of such officers on the seaboard, and in that way, enable it to carry out its collective bargaining agreement with steadily improving conditions.

All men who may be reached through this notice, should be informed that working conditions are of the best and that wages have increased during the past few years from 50 per cent to 100 per cent and now range from $150 to $300 a month.

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